

Christmas Devotion #4



Ask: If someone asked, ‘What is Christmas about?’ what are some answers people might say? *Presents, lights, Christmas tree, family, church, Jesus, etc.*



Dialogue: While all of those things are usually a part of Christmas, the true meaning of Christmas is about the cross.

God has always been here—He is eternal. God created everything in the solar system and on the earth—from the big blazing sun to the tiniest lady bug. What are some of your favorite things that God made? *(Let children respond)* After God created this world, he said that it was very good!

God gave Adam and Eve, the first two people he created, one rule and he gave them the freewill to choose to obey him or not. God did this because he loved Adam and Eve and he didn’t want to force them to obey him like robots. He wanted Adam and Eve to freely choose to love him and obey him. Did Adam and Eve choose to obey or disobey God? *(Disobey)* Disobedience is called sin in the Bible. You can also say that **sin** is “anything that we think *(point to your head)*, say *(point to your mouth)*, or do *(wave your hands)* that breaks God’s law”. *(Have the children repeat that definition with you with the actions).* Adam and Eve’s sin affected the entire universe. **Their** disobedience is the reason why bad things happen in the world today. Sin is **not** God’s fault. There are many consequences for sin, but the main one is death.



Activity:

1. Before class write some of the consequences of sin on some dominos: **Sin, physical death, spiritual death, eternal death**, suffering, pain, tornadoes, war, lying, stealing, etc. The key ones to write are bolded but you could also write some other consequences if you would like. You can put a mailing label on the back of the domino to write on, cut a piece of paper to fit the back of the domino and tape it to the domino, or write directly on the back of the domino.
2. Set up the dominos so they are standing an inch apart, with the key ones near the beginning.
3. Then let a child knock down the first domino and watch as the rest fall down too.

Supplies:

- At least four dominoes
- Blank mailing labels, or paper, tape, and scissors.
- Pen or permanent marker



Look Up: Romans 6:23a



Dialogue: There are three types of death as a result of sin. One is physical death—that is dying here on earth. The second is spiritual death, meaning that our friendship with God is dead. And the third is eternal death, which means being forever separated from God in a terrible place of punishment after we die. Adam and Eve deserved this punishment for their sin, and because you and I have sinned, we deserve this punishment too.

God is just—which means that he has to punish sin. He cannot let us get away with doing what is wrong. What happens to a student in your class at school or at church that does wrong? (*He/she sits in time out, leaves the classroom, loss of privileges, etc.*) Is your teacher being a good teacher or a bad teacher when your teacher punishes this student for misbehaving? (*Good teacher*) Your teacher is being just by not letting that student get away with what is wrong. And since God is just he cannot let us get away with doing what is wrong either. God's justice demands that the punishment/payment of sin must be made...but in his love and his grace, he provided a way so that you and I don't have to pay it ourselves.

When Adam and Eve sinned, God promised to send a Savior (*Read Genesis 3:15*). A Savior is someone that rescues you from a problem. For example, if you were drowning in a pool, who might come save you? (*Parents, lifeguard, friend, etc.*) If you are drowning you cannot save yourself. If your friend was drowning too, he couldn't help you either. You need someone that is NOT drowning in order to come and help you.

In the same way, you cannot save yourself from the punishment of sin; neither can your friend, Pastor, and parents because they have also sinned and are under the same punishment. Only someone perfect, who is not under the punishment of sin, could take your place and the punishment for your sin. Who do you think this person is? (*Jesus*) Jesus is God—He is the creator of time, lives outside of time, and yet stepped into time in order to be our Savior from sin. Jesus has always existed, but Christmas time is when we celebrate that the eternal, Creator of the world (*Colossian 1:16-17*) was born as a baby to be our Savior. Our Savior had to be 100% man and 100% God. Jesus had to be 100% man because it was man who sinned so only a perfect man could be our substitute, but he also had to be 100% God. Otherwise, if Jesus would have been born completely of man, he also would have inherited the sin nature from Adam and would have the same sin problem we do—he could not have been our Savior because he would need saving too. But since Jesus is 100% man and 100% God, he was able to be our Savior.

Sometimes people say that the Garden is Eden, after Adam and Eve sinned, is when and where God began his rescue plan. But even though Genesis 3:15 is when the rescue plan was set in motion, God already knew that Adam and Eve were going to sin, even before he created them, and he knew what he was going to do about sin. There has never been a time when God didn't know what he was going to do about sin. He knew before the foundation of the world when, where, and how Jesus was going to be the Savior from our sin.



Look Up: 1 Peter 1:20



Dialogue: God is all-knowing. A big fancy word to say that God is all-knowing is "omniscient". "Omni" means "all" and "scient" means "knowing." When you look at the word "scient" does that remind you of a subject at school? (*Science*) The study of science has to do with knowledge so that can help you to remember that omniscient means all-knowing. Because God is all-knowing he is able to tell us what is going to happen in the future. Do you remember the word that starts with a "P" that means that God tells man what is going to happen in the

Supplies:

- Piece of paper with the word "Omniscient" written on it.
- Marker

future? (*Prophecy*) In earlier devotions, we learned about some prophecies that God gave about the Savior. Not only is God all-knowing to tell us what is going to happen in the future, but he is also all-powerful (also called “omnipotent”) to make those prophecies come true. God is amazing!



Ask: (*Fill in key details of Jesus’ birth, life, and death as necessary*)

- What are some things that happened at Jesus’ birth?
- What are some things Jesus did as an adult?
- What are some things that happened to Jesus during the time of his death?



Dialogue: Jesus didn’t come just to heal people and tell people about God. The reason that Jesus came was to be our Savior from sin. In order to take the punishment for sin, Jesus had to die because the wages of sin is death. When Jesus died he had to give his blood because without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness (Heb 9:22b). So Christmas is really about the cross. (*Pause*) What holiday do we celebrate to remember when Jesus rose from the dead? (*Easter!*) Jesus didn’t stay dead; he rose again three days later because he is more powerful than sin and death and his resurrection showed that the punishment for sin had been made and accepted by God. Now because of what Jesus did you can have your sins forgiven.



Look Up: John 1:12



Dialogue: At Christmas you will probably receive Christmas presents. What sort of presents are you hoping to get? (*Let children answer*) What if someone gives you a gift, but you never open it? Would you get to benefit from that present? (*No*) In the same way, God is now offering you the gift of forgiveness. Because Jesus came and died on the cross and rose again, God can offer you the gift of forgiveness from your sin but you have to receive it. Just like you can reject a gift that someone gives you, so you can also reject God’s gift—he won’t force you to take it. But he loves you and desires for you to receive it. Let’s look at John 1:12 again.

- “Yet to all who received him” — This means to take as your very own, just like you would receive a Christmas gift as your very own.
- “to those who believed in his name” — This means to believe or trust completely that Jesus’ death and resurrection is the only way to have your sin forgiven. You are not trusting in your own good works, baptism, another religion, or anything else to save you from sin.
- “he gave the right to become children of God” — When you believe in Jesus as your Savior you become part of God’s forever family. You receive eternal life, instead of death. You become God’s friend while you are here on earth and one day you will live forever with God in Heaven.

If you have never believed in Jesus, do you believe in Jesus as your Savior from sin right now? (*Pause*) If so, you can tell God three things:

- Admit that you have sinned against God, broken his law, and are sorry.
- Believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose again to forgive you.
- Ask God to forgive you.

(Depending on your setting, if there are children that have indicated that they would like to pray to believe in Jesus allow them to pray out loud using their own words (best option), quietly by themselves, or repeating after you. You may want to separate from the group to do the salvation counseling with the children that want to believe in Jesus so that you can have focused time with them. Follow up with these children as able for assurance counseling and discipleship.)



Ponder and Pray: When you celebrate Christmas this year, take time to remember that Christmas is about the cross!

- For children that have believed in Jesus as their Savior, encourage them to THANK Jesus for being their Savior and to SHARE the good news about the Savior with others in some way during Christmas.
- For children that have not believed in Jesus as their Savior and did not want to do so during this lesson, continue to share about the Savior with them and pray that they would receive him this Christmas. Salvation is the best present to receive!

Watch this video as a review and reminder that Christmas is about the Cross-
<https://youtu.be/s1UI0yOLc-o>

Further Study:

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- Sharing the Gospel with Children/ Salvation Counseling Help – www.networkerstec.com/kids-gospel.html
 - Sharing the Gospel at Christmas - www.networkerstec.com/christmas-resources.html
 - Gospel Musical - www.networkerstec.com/good-news-musical.html
 - Sharing the Gospel at Halloween - www.networkerstec.com/halloween.html
 - **FREE PDF download** of additional Christmas devotionals in this series:
www.networkerstec.com/christmas-resources.html